

Usiwache hali gako ya
maisha gako, chukua
kituo cha VCT

AIDSMARK
Changing Behavior, Improving Lives

PSI

**The Social Marketing
Approach to**

Voluntary Counseling and Testing

Voluntary counseling and testing for HIV/AIDS (VCT) is effective and economical in stopping the spread of the disease and caring for those affected by it. VCT creates a powerful motivation to change sexual behaviors, whether clients test positive or negative. It also opens a critical gateway to care and support services.

Through social marketing, Population Services International (PSI) is overcoming obstacles that tend to discourage clients from seeking VCT—fear of stigma, no perception of the benefits of testing without a cure or simple lack of information about where and how to access services. This approach has allowed rapid expansion of PSI's VCT program into more than 20 countries, averting over 52,000 cases of HIV/AIDS since 2001.



PSI pursues strategies that not only meet demand for VCT, but actually *create it*:

- ▶ **Commercial-style marketing campaigns** increase awareness and knowledge of available VCT services.
- ▶ **Mobile VCT units and traveling clinics** deliver services to hard-to-reach and high-risk populations.
- ▶ **Franchised VCT services** ensure strong, recognized brands and messages, and signify high-quality standards.
- ▶ **Rapid expansion** ensures a burgeoning client base and keeps VCT affordable and reliable. As more people test, stigma is reduced and personal risk perceptions increase.
- ▶ **Immediate test results and robust follow-up care and support services** motivate behavior change and prolong and improve the lives of those infected.

The Franchise Factor

PSI draws on a franchise model for VCT delivery, in which VCT sites in each country share a common brand that are designed to symbolize high-quality services. They also share standardized tools—training curricula, operational guidelines, counseling and testing protocols and monitoring and evaluation systems—to ensure consistent, confidential,

best-in-class services. Having a standard set of VCT tools also enables franchises to expand quickly and easily.

Branded VCT franchises use strong mass media and interpersonal communications strategies to boost demand and reduce stigma. These activities are proven to change behaviors in populations at risk for HIV.

“I tell you, if we are to win this battle, we must confront this problem openly.”

—Kenneth Kaunda, former President of Zambia who publicly underwent HIV testing at a New Start Center in Lusaka to promote VCT.

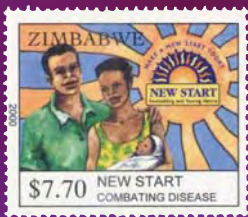
“My life now is different, and my values have changed. Now I am more interested in having a better life, healthier habits, and more people care about me.”

—Elias Mondlane, *Renascer* VCT client (PSI/Mozambique)

A “New Start” for Zimbabweans

In Zimbabwe, VCT comes to the public under the banner of “New Start,” serving over 13,000 clients every month. New Start expanded from 1 to 20 sites in just five years, thanks to a strategic franchising approach that stresses service quality. On average, an impressive 25% of New Start clients in Zimbabwe are seen through mobile outreach efforts. The Zimbabwe New Start network has seen nearly 350,000 clients through September 2004, and is still growing.

At the heart of the New Start brand is a multimedia communications campaign that delivers positive, empowering messages through radio, television, newspapers, and other print materials—including a postage stamp designed by the Government of Zimbabwe in recognition of the success of the New Start project.



VCT on the Move

PSI utilizes mobile VCT units to deliver cost-effective VCT to hard-to-reach and high-risk populations. These units, staffed by a team of counselors and a trained laboratory technician, set up in schools, local hangouts and workplaces for a period of one to two weeks, returning in approximately three months to offer follow-up services. Local partner organizations in the area are also tapped to promote the service and to provide post-test care and support to affected residents.



Mobile outreach has proved so effective that in Zimbabwe, for example, more than 8,000 clients were tested and referred in just the first six months of operation.

Results Today, Hope for Tomorrow

Same-day testing using rapid HIV tests is a key incentive for people to seek VCT, and is the standard for PSI VCT sites. International research shows a dramatic spike in client uptake when test results are made available immediately. When clients must return for their results, as many as one third to half will fail to do so. But, at PSI's VCT sites, 99% of clients receive their test results the same day.



Post-test services are delivered more efficiently with same-day testing, and PSI's franchise approach ensures consistently robust referral networks. Client-focused counseling enables HIV+ clients to better understand their health needs and to seek early treatment for

life-threatening opportunistic infections. Many will also be referred to treatment, care and prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) programs. In addition, post-test clubs offer social and emotional support that improve the quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS. And all clients, whether testing positive or negative, come away with personalized risk reduction plans to help ensure the HIV epidemic is stopped in its tracks.

VCT on Wheels: Reaching High Risk Groups in India

Operation Lighthouse (OPL) is an integrated HIV/AIDS prevention project managed by PSI and funded by USAID, which includes 14 branded Saadhan VCT centers targeting high-risk groups such as truckers, commercial sex workers and their clients. These VCT sites are located in areas that are readily accessible to high-risk groups, and include STI services as well as VCT. PSI operates three mobile VCT clinics as part of OPL which extends the reach and impact of the drop-in Saadhan centers. Each VCT site and mobile clinic offers high quality VCT counseling and same-day rapid HIV testing—previously rare in India—and aims to link clients immediately with community organizations for VCT post-test care and support. To date, the centers have seen over 31,000 clients. In 2004, the percentage of Saadhan clients who were HIV positive was almost 13 percent — highlighting the urgent need for these targeted services in India.



Born Again in Mozambique

Renascer, the brand of VCT in Mozambique, means "to be born again," and intends to offer hope for people who learn their HIV status so they can make new plans and set goals. In 2003, almost 40,000 people received HIV counseling and testing through PSI-supported sites; more than one-third were pregnant women.

Customer satisfaction is a central goal for *Renascer*. Clients are asked to complete an exit survey, and more than 90% have said they would recommend these VCT services on to others. Clients also receive invitation cards to pass on to others, since word-of-mouth is a proven marketing tool for VCT.

PSI MISSION

PSI's mission is to improve the health and well-being of low-income people through the social marketing of high quality, affordable health products and services. PSI has more than 30 years experience, in over 60 countries around the world, in family planning, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention, malaria, safe water systems, and most recently TB prevention and treatment.

PSI launched its first VCT Social Marketing project in Zimbabwe in 1999 and since then the programs have grown exponentially. As of 2004, PSI implements VCT projects in the following 20 countries worldwide: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Guyana, Haiti, India, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Togo, Uganda, Rwanda, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Zambia.

AIDSMARK MISSION

Since 1997, AIDSMARK has used social marketing to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections throughout the world. Funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and managed by Population Services International (PSI), AIDSMARK collaborates with USAID missions and other international donors, as well as with host governments, non-governmental organizations and commercial enterprises to:

- ▶ Broaden current programs to include a wider range of products and services;
- ▶ Scale up programs to reach additional target groups and intensify efforts within current target groups;
- ▶ Increase the capacity of programs in management, marketing, communications and research; and
- ▶ Start new programs.

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